

Northampton Mercury

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015

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SEARCH FOR STARS TO JOIN STRICTLY 2015 LINE-UP

DANCE SCHOOL TAKES OVER RUNNING STRICTLY NORTHAMPTON

The quest to find prospective dancers for Strictly Northampton 2015 has begun after details of this year's show sponsor were revealed.

A total of £36,631.67 was raised for Cynthia Spencer Hospice last year with donations from local sponsors, audience members and contestants' own fundraising efforts.

Previously organised by the *Chronicle & Echo*, the show has now been taken over, in full, by Step By Step Dance School, based in Northampton. The school has provided the professional dance partners and training for the show since it began in 2010.

Continuing headline sponsors Aspers Casino in Northampton this week held a coffee morning in aid of Cynthia Spencer where the final cheque of last year's proceeds was handed to the charity.

Local groups, including Northampton BID, TESS

Group and Age UK attended the coffee morning, falling in National Coffee Week, to pledge their support for this year's event and enjoy cakes baked by Aspers staff.

An Aspers spokesman said: "We are more than just a casino. We are all about entertainment and Cynthia Spencer is our main associated charity, so getting involved with Strictly is a no-brainer for us."

"While we were headline sponsors last year, the fantastic total raised was down to the support of the general public."

Editor of the *Chron*, David Summers, said: "After five shows, and more than £150,000 raised for charity, I have decided that the time is right to step aside and I am delighted that Step By Step Dance School will continue Strictly Northampton."

If you would like to take part in this year's show, email Andrzej Mialkowski at info@danceschool-stepbystep.com



Dancers from Step By Step Dance School, which has taken over the running of Strictly Northampton from the Chron, pictured with Damien Gawel from Aspers

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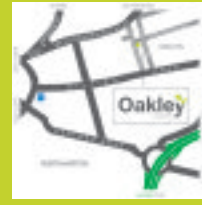
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A sneeze 'could kill cyclist'

By CALLUM JONES
Reporter
callum.jones@jpress.co.uk

A cyclist who suffered serious head injuries after she was involved in a collision with a car in Northampton, has been told not to blow her nose as she could open a crack in her skull. She says she now realises the importance of wearing a helmet while cycling.

Elaine Tonks was cycling to work when she was thrown off her bike after she was involved in a collision with a car as she was crossing Crestwood Road, near Woodvale Primary School, at about 8.15am.

The 35-year-old is currently in Northampton General Hospital recovering from her injuries, including two fractured cheekbones.

She said: "I had to have an operation on my knee bone as I smashed it in three places. I have fractured both cheek bones and I have a crack above

my eye socket that exposed my skull. The doctor has told me not to blow my nose as I could open up the crack. I do feel lucky to be alive as I was not wearing a helmet. I will always wear a helmet now."

Ms Tonks said she would also advise all cyclists to take extra care on zebra crossings, as that is where her collision occurred.

As well as recovering from her injuries, Ms Tonks said she was also having to cope with the fact she would not be able to go on a 10-day cycling holiday to Vietnam she had booked for May 7.

She said: "Unfortunately I do not have any insurance for the holiday. I was planning to buy insurance this week so another thing I have learnt is that you should buy insurance when you book the holiday."

A spokesman for Northamptonshire Police confirmed that no action would be taken against the driver.



Elaine Tonks took this selfie from her hospital bed showing her injuries

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Charity match raises £11,000

By ALICE DYER
Reporter
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The Leon Barwell Foundation Trophy match raised £11,000 for the charity to help families affected by cancer, it has been announced.

The match, held at Sixfields earlier this month, featured stars such as Rugby World Cup winners Ben Cohen, Matt Dawson, Mike Catt and Jason Robinson in the line-up and included a host of Saints, Cobblers and Steelbacks legends.

The Leon Barwell Legends and Leon Barwell All-Stars played out an entertaining 4-4 draw, with Leon's two sons Henry and Ben, and step-son Ashley, taking to the field.

The match also saw former Saints and four-time British and Irish Lions Head Coach Sir Ian McGeechan face-off against ex-Cobblers boss Ian Atkins.

The foundation, which was

set up by the Barwell family in memory of Leon, who died following a battle with cancer in June 2013, aged 45, aims to help families living with cancer by providing financial support to enjoy memorable events together.

In the months leading up to his passing, Leon was able to enjoy a skiing trip with his family as well as attend the Aviva Premiership Final between his beloved Saints and Leicester Tigers, and the money raised from the Trophy match will go towards helping families share similar experiences.

Leon's widow and Foundation trustee, Paula Barwell, said: "It was a fantastic day at Sixfields and myself and my fellow trustees were overwhelmed by the support we received from everyone involved - from the players to the volunteers who helped on the day.

"To raise £11,000 for the Foundation is absolutely brilliant, and will allow



The Leon Barwell Foundation Trophy match at Sixfields earlier this month included a host of Rugby World Cup winners and former Cobblers players

more families affected by cancer to spend quality time together while making lasting memories.

"We've had a number of

applications from families since the game, and we hope to help as many people as possible with the money raised."



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Artist reunited with stolen art

By CALLUM JONES
Reporter
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A 79-year-old Northampton grandfather who was left without a year's worth of his beloved artwork after a thief stole his car has been reunited with his paintings.

Brian Bodily was left devastated after thieves stole his paintings but after an appeal in the *Chronicle & Echo* and a police investigation, the stolen car was found and the artwork was still there.

Mr Bodily was at home in Ennerdale Road, Spinney Hill, on Thursday last week at 5am when he heard his door open and then his house alarm went off.

Despite the fact that he is suffering from a bad back and has had a full hip replacement, Mr Bodily went downstairs to investigate what was happening.

When he got to the door he realised that his car keys were missing and he then heard the engine of his Vauxhall Zafira car revving outside his house.

Due to the unorthodox design of the handbrake, the thief was struggling to get the car to move quickly and Mr Bodily ran towards the vehicle to try to stop the thief.

However, the thief managed to work out how to use the handbrake and then sped off.

Mr Bodily, who took up painting after his wife died nine years ago, said he was upset about the loss of his car but also about the fact he had lost so many of his paintings that he was due to show in an art exhibition.

He said: "I had left the paintings in the car the night before as I had parked the car near a tree so the back door didn't open easily.

"I had planned to take them in the house in the morning," Mr Bodily added.

'Luckily all of his artwork as left in the car, along with other items'

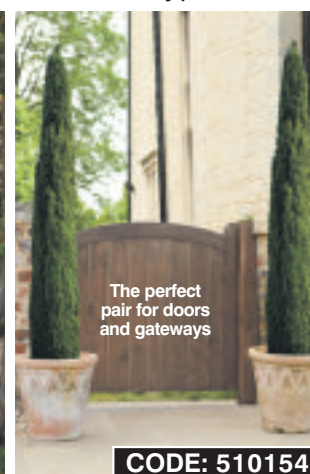
Brian Bodily's granddaughter, Lucy Gregory had put an appeal out on social media for anyone who may have seen her grandfather's car or any of his paintings. Speaking last week, Ms Gregory said: "To someone else these paintings mean nothing but to us they are irreplaceable and have huge sentimental value."

Over the bank holiday weekend, Ms Gregory said Northamptonshire Police had been in touch with the family. She said: "We have been contacted by the police and told that the car has been recovered. Luckily all of his art work was left in the car as were most of his other belongings."

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Brian Bodily, 79, was left devastated by the theft of his beloved artwork after thieves stole his car from outside his home in Northampton

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Trevor Skidmore feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 10 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although

that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service the Northampton, Kettering, Wellingborough & Corby areas and Trevor is finding that his

approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for,

which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Trevor a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!



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'I lost my class leader's weight'

By Nick Spoons
Chief reporter
nick.spoons@jpress.co.uk

A diabetic woman from Northampton did so well at a slimming group she lost the equivalent of her class leader's body weight.

Val De Boer, aged 51, from Bramhall Rise in Duston, was referred to Weight Watchers in the hope of reversing the effects of her Type Two diabetes.

Reluctantly, she agreed after being told she was entitled to 12 weeks of free classes.

Fifteen months later she has lost 10 stone 10 pounds, which is the weight of the course leader, Sarah Barnes. Mrs Barnes said: "I was thinking of a way to express how well Val's done and I realised she had been carrying around a 'me' for years.

"To get rid of that weight so quickly, but in a healthy way, is just amazing."

Mrs Barnes said Val has lost the most weight of any slimmer in her 17 years as leader. What is more, Val is also the only person never to have put any on between sessions.

The slimming leader credits Val's success to her healthy diet, which sees her choose foods from the "filling and healthy" list designed to stop slimmers from snacking on junk food.

The list includes foods such as wholemeal rice, fruit and veg and lean protein.

Importantly, all foods



Val De Boer, with her tutor, Sarah Barnes

on the list are low in salt, saturated fat and sugar.

By following the plan, Val has consistently lost two pounds a week, which is the safe limit.

She has even seen her blood counts drop from a concerning level in January 2014 to 40 per cent lower, which has amazed doctors.

Val, who works at Barclaycard in Brackmills, said: "When I was at the surgery for a check-up four months after I started on the plan, the nurse said she thought the blood tests had been sent back wrong.

"They can't believe how much weight has gone."

Mrs Barnes says that, aside from the personal benefits, Val is "an inspiration" to others in the group, which meets in Weston Favell.

Val said: "I've now become a helper at the group, and that makes me more determined to lose weight because I know I have to go so I need to show I'm doing well and show other people what you can achieve."

She said: "I feel 100 per cent better. I think if I can do it anyone can."

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County entrepreneurs top new UK richest list

By FRANCESCA GOSLING
Reporter
francesca.gosling@jpress.co.uk

Five entrepreneurs who made their names in Northamptonshire have been listed among the 20 wealthiest in the east of England, with one recently achieving billionaire status.

The Sunday Times Wealth League, published this morning, ranks David Ross, of the David Ross Education Trust, as fifth on the list with a value of £1 billion, having expanded his wealth by £108 million in the last year. This puts him at 108th place in the UK.

The David Ross Education Trust funds 20 primary and secondary academies across the country, many of which are in Northamptonshire and include Briar Hill Primary and Malcolm Arnold in Northampton, Welton CE near Daventry and Greenfields Primary in Kettering.

Number eight on the list



Leon Max, named one of the wealthiest in the region, at his facility at Easton Neston

is David Wilson and family, founders of David Wilson Homes and Davidsons Homes, which have been involved in major building projects in the county. With a value of £515 million, the family are ranked 213th wealthiest in

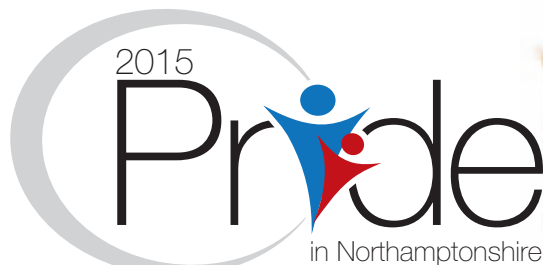
the country.

At number 12, and joint with Mel Morris, is Russian-American fashion designer Leon Max, whose clothing brand Max Studio is based in Towcester.

In 2012 he was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Northampton and his fashion empire has sustained a wealth of £400 million, putting him in 262nd place nationally.

Last on the list at number 20 is former Conservative politician Lord Michael Heseltine and his family, of Thenford in South Northamptonshire. The Haymarket Publishing Group chairman owns a 1,200-acre farm near Banbury and was named the county's richest man in 2008.

Although his regional position in the league has fallen by three positions since last year, his wealth has increased by £2 million, giving him a total of £280 million and ranking his family at 357 in the country.



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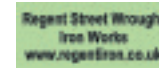
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To nominate please visit <http://goo.gl/forms/iT1io4Yrs9> or e-mail: et.exhibitions@jpress.co.uk and write a minimum of 300 and a maximum of 500 words about your special person(s) and include one sentence in 30-50 words why you think this person(s) should win an award and include your name and contact details and the name and contact details of the person(s) nominating. Deadline is Sunday 6th September. Or post to Pride in Northamptonshire, c/o Northants Newspapers, Newspaper House, Ise Park, Rothwell Road, Kettering, Northants, NN16 8GA

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School improves rating

By CALLUM JONES
Reporter
callum.jones@jpress.co.uk

A Northampton primary school placed in special measures by Ofsted has shown signs of improvement according to a report released.

Teaching standards came under strong criticism when the Government watchdog graded Thorplands Primary School, in Billing Brook Road, before it became an academy in 2013.

But the results of an inspection in March, released today, have seen the school upgraded to "requires improvement".

Ofsted found the co-headteachers, Angela Pratt and Liz Abel, "have developed an effective team" who are "improving all aspects of education in the academy".

Leadership and management, the behaviour and safety of pupils, and early years provision were all graded as good, the report said.

Although the quality of teaching and achievement of pupils still requires improve-



Staff and children at Thorplands Primary School have been told by Ofsted they are no longer in special measures

ment, the inspectors noted "major improvements in the quality of teaching."

The report adds: "[Teachers] manage classes well and give pupils interesting activities that hold their interest and develop their enthusiasm."

The academy, run by The Education Fellowship academy, also received praise for looking after the needs of disabled pupils.

But statistics show that in 2014, the school was in the bottom 20 per cent in Britain for key stage one reading stand-

ards.

Ofsted inspectors also noted a number of areas that need to improve.

The report states: "There are still too many inconsistencies in teaching to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress, and so make up the considerable gaps in their achievement from their previous education."

The inspection was the school's first since becoming an Education Fellowship academy on April 1, 2013 at which time it was in special measures.



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MG's budget big brother

MG must be hoping that less is more with the relaunch of the larger of its two models, the blink-and-you'll-miss-it MG6.

Now the company, based in China but with a modest UK home in the Birmingham factory where the original Mini was once built, is slashing prices of the MG6, ditching the option of a petrol engine and booting out the saloon version too.

That leaves a pared down range, costing £3,000 less than before, with modest changes to looks inside and

out, slightly better performance and economy from its diesel engine and a boost to the already high standard equipment count.

MG will be pretty happy if it sells 600 of them this year through a growing dealer network enjoying rising sales, mostly of the smaller MG3.

Like that lively little run-around, its big brother MG6 has no-haggle prices (so don't try), the cheapest model in the three-car line up costing just £13,995.

They'll be getting an S grade car with air con, hill

start assist, heated front seats, and an engine that provides enough performance and a likely 50mpg in everyday use.

The £16,195 TS brings satellite navigation (a new system that works well), Bluetooth and a DAB radio, auto lights, wipers and dimming mirror and rear parking sensors.

The range topping TL (£17,955) has leather trim, electric seats, dual zone climate control and rear parking camera.

Rides and handles decently, this new car has a spacious back seat and big boot.



MG6 GT TL

PRICE: £17,995

DRIVETRAIN: 1.9 litre 148bhp diesel engine, 6-speed gearbox

PERFORMANCE: Top speed 120mph,

0-60mph 8.4 seconds

ECONOMY: Euro average

60.7mpg CO2 119g/km road tax

£0 first year, then £30

SIZE: 4651mm long,

2008mm wide

SAFETY: EuroNCAP 4 stars

INSURANCE GROUP: 15

WARRANTY: Three years or

60,000 miles

BIK: 21 per cent

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05, 1.6, 131000 miles, silver, petrol, 2005, Full Bose sound system, Audi factory sat nav, parking sensors, alloys, black sporty interior, 6 speed manual, 3 doors, full service history. Very good condition. £3,150 ono
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2005 £3,150 ono

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2006 £1500 ono

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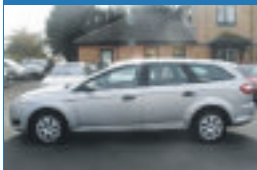
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estate, diesel, Metallic grey, 2008, 114,500 miles, 5 seats, Mot until October 2015, Good condition, Runs well, electric windows, cruise control, air conditioning, alloy wheels, Heated front screen. (Pic for ref only) **Tel:01933 624005**

2008 £3995

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1996 £250

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1998 £395 ono



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2001 £1,000 ono

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Skoda


SKODA FABIA 3 105 1.6, 47k miles, black, petrol, 2009, Top of range. Economical. Reliable. FSH, MOT. £3,750
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2009 £3,750

Smart


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2003 £1,599 ono

Suzuki


SUZUKI ALTO S23 10, 1.0, GU06HTG, 2.2, 121000 miles, Silver, Diesel, 2006. £3,750 ono
Tel: 01327350035

2010 £2,900


Toyota


Toyota Verso T/Spirit GU06HTG, 2.2, 121000 miles, Silver, Diesel, 2006. £3,750 ono
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2006 £3,750 ono

Suzuki

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2008

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1997

£400 ono

Volvo

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4 door saloon, diesel, Metallic grey, 2007, 11147 miles, 5 seats, Full service history, recently serviced, new discs on back, MOT til november 2015, Full winter pack, Xenon Bulbs. Heated leather seats, ABS, 6 CD Changer, all Volvo Extras. Very Comfortable. Picture for reference. £4600 ono
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2007

£4600 ono

VOLVO V70 SE AUTO 2.4



estate, petrol, Metallic blue, 1999, 116700 miles, 10 Months MOT, serviced regular, leather interior, 2 owners from. Picture for ref only. £2450 ono
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1999

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SPORT

Wilder: Collins call was tough

Cobblers boss says releasing defender was a 'difficult' decision

FOOTBALL

Cobblers boss Chris Wilder has admitted that releasing Lee Collins was 'arguably the most difficult decision' he had to make when finalising the club's retained list.

Collins has been a first-team regular this season, but was one of seven out-of-contract players to be shown the Sixfields door on Monday morning, with the others being Matt Duke, Darren Carter, Ian Morris, Ben Tozer, Lewis Hornby and Ross Perry.

Chris Hackett and John-Joe O'Toole have also been placed on the transfer list as Wilder tries to reshape his squad following their 12th place finish in Sky Bet League Two this season.

The Town boss admits no decision to release a player is ever an easy one, but he admitted that releasing Collins was particularly tough.

"I think Lee's been arguably the most difficult decision that we have had to make," said Wilder.

"He has been here a couple of years, and didn't have a great time with injuries in his second season.

"I have to say that since Christmas he has done well, and it was really borderline

with Lee right up to the past week.

"But we have decided not to offer Lee a contract, as we have two central defenders there that we expect to play in Zander Diamond and Ryan Cresswell.

"They are both on three-year deals, and we are going to look to bring in a natural left-footed centre-half to complement those two.

"We are looking at the shape we might play as well, and we are looking for somebody that comfortably plays on the left of a three.

"But it was a difficult decision, because Lee has shown a reaction since Christmas, and has been in the team.

"Maybe people are surprised and I can see that, but we have made the decision, and Lee might possibly want to go and play first-team football as well, so we understand that. You make these decisions on a feeling that we can improve on certain situations.

"Maybe we might want to go and get a different type of player to Lee, and any decision you make is not always going to be universally popular.

"I released Alex Nicholls, that wasn't a popular decision, we released Kelvin Langmead, that wasn't a popular decision, but I am not here for it to be a vote like something off the X

Factor. I have to make the decisions myself, through experience, and try to take things forward.

"That's how it is, it's how football is, and I understand there might be a few people not getting that and not seeing the decision, but I have to back my judgment."

Wilder knows there is always a risk when releasing players, that they may go on to other clubs and excel.

The Cobblers boss accepts that he may at times get decisions wrong, and says he wishes Collins and all the other players released bright futures.

"If Lee goes on to better things then I wish him all the best," said Wilder.

"I am not a bitter manager, I am not wanting any of these players to leave here and their careers to slide, and not make a living or enjoy success.

"You can look back and think 'maybe that wasn't the right decision', and I have made plenty of those decisions over the past 10 years of being a manager, but you back yourself to make more right decisions than wrong ones."

Collins was signed by Aidy Boothroyd in February, 2013.

In all he made 82 starts for the Cobblers as well as four substitute appearances, scoring one goal.



SURPRISE DECISION Cobblers defender Lee Collins has not been offered a new contract at Sixfields

Manoa in award bid

SAINTS star Samu Manoa has been shortlisted for the RPA players' player of the season award.

This prestigious prize, which is voted for by players in the Aviva Premiership, will be handed out at the RPA awards ceremony at Battersea Evolution on Wednesday, May 13.

Manoa will be up against Bath duo George Ford and Jonathan Joseph, as well as Newcastle winger Sinoti Sinoti and Exeter No.8 Thomas Waldrom.

RUGBY

The Saints man has also been nominated for the Green Flag forward of the season award, which will be presented at the Aviva Premiership Rugby awards evening on May 20.

"It's a great feeling to have the support of the guys who you go into battle with and against each weekend," Manoa said of his RPA nomination.

"I've worked very

hard this season to get myself playing to a consistent level each week and to be rewarded for all that extra work, really means a lot."

Saints, who were without a game last weekend, are back in Aviva Premiership action on Saturday when they host rock-bottom London Welsh at Franklin's Gardens (ko 3pm).

A win will guarantee a home tie in the play-off semi-finals for Jim Mallinder's men.

Willey in the runs

DAVID WILLEY warmed up for his England duty by hitting a quickfire 66 in a second XI Twenty20 match at Warwickshire last week.

Willey travels to Dublin this week to join up with the England team ahead of the one-day international against Ireland, which takes place on Friday.

The Northants all-rounder is hoping to make his first senior appearance for his country.

Willey was left out of Northants' four-day match

CRICKET

against Lancashire at the County Ground this week, but travelled to Birmingham on Thursday for some white-ball cricket.

Willey was in good batting form as he hit a robust 66 as the Steelbacks eased past the Bears in the first of two matches at Edgbaston by seven wickets with nearly seven overs to spare.

Josh Cobb picked up two wickets as Warwickshire compiled 134 for four, and

the efforts of Willey and Kyle Coetzer (35 not out) steered the County to 138 for three in just the 14th over.

But the Bears got their revenge in the second game.

Cobb top-scored with 33 from 42 balls - backed up by trialist Aaron West - in the County's disappointing 103 for seven, and Warwickshire eased to 107 for two.

Northants are back in LV= Championship Division Two action on Sunday when they begin a four-day game at Derbyshire.